



Emergency Management and Response Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC)

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NOTE: This INFOGRAM will be distributed weekly to provide members of the Emergency Services Sector with information concerning the protection of their critical infrastructures. For further information, contact the Emergency Management and Response- Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EMR-ISAC) at (301) 447-1325 or by e-mail at emr-isac@fema.dhs.gov.

Suicide in the Fire Service

(Source: National Fallen Firefighters Foundation)

The fire service has not escaped occasional incidents of suicide in recent years. In their [Meeting Report](#) (PDF, 1.6 Mb), the [National Fallen Firefighters Foundation](#) (NFFF) revealed that several large metro fire departments have experienced multiple “high-profile suicides.” According to the NFFF, these tragic losses sparked a dramatic upsurge in concern for comprehending incidences of firefighter suicide.

As an extension of its ongoing efforts, the NFFF convened a summit to review the current “state of the science” to understand suicidal behavior and the current “state of the art” regarding prevention and intervention. The Meeting Report provided an overview of the summit discussions and suggested strategic planning starting points for actions to deter or prevent depression and suicide among firefighters. This overview is a summarization of a longer, more substantive [White Paper](#) (PDF, 288 Kb) on the issue.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) noted in the White Paper “the strong sense of urgency and heightened desire to take strong and immediate preventive action.” Therefore, it contains 25 findings and recommendations for suicide surveillance, prevention, and intervention measures for review and application by the nation’s fire service.

Emergency Vehicle Operations Safety

(Source: U.S. Fire Administration)

Although the duties performed by law enforcement officers, firefighters, and emergency medical services personnel differ in many respects, they all face similar hazards in emergency vehicles when responding to or returning from the scene of an incident. Year after year, many of these on-duty first responders are injured or killed in vehicle crashes, as mentioned in the publication “[Alive on Arrival](#)” (PDF, 581 Kb) by the [U.S. Fire Administration](#) (USFA).

To ascertain what can be done to prevent these injuries or deaths, the [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) reexamined the USFA document: “[Best Practices for Emergency Vehicle and Roadway Operations Safety in the Emergency Services](#)” (PDF, 62 Mb). Among the many proposals, the text placed emphasis on ensuring adequate training for all personnel who drive emergency vehicles, policy development, education, and technology.

The most recent USFA [Coffee Break Training](#) (PDF, 458 Kb) installment discussed the following basic vehicle safety guidelines:

- Anyone driving or riding as a passenger in any emergency vehicle should be wearing a seatbelt.
- Drivers should not exceed the posted speed limit and proceed even slower when road conditions or visibility are poor.
- Operators should always stop at intersections with a negative right of way and at all railroad crossings.

See [Emergency Vehicles Safe Operations](#) (PDF, 436 Kb) for more accident mitigation suggestions.

Emergency Services Safety Officers

(Source: U.S. Fire Administration)

The roles and responsibilities of the Health and Safety Officer (HSO) and Incident Safety Officer (ISO) are the subject of another [Coffee Break Training](#) (PDF, 359 Kb) installment by the [U.S. Fire Administration](#).

Through education, engineering, and enforcement, Emergency Services Sector leaders are responsible for the safety and protection of their personnel. Specifically, a department's HSO manages the organization's occupational health and safety program. However, during an incident or event response activity, it is the ISO who endeavors to minimize risk to the department's deployed responders.

The [Emergency Management and Response—Information Sharing and Analysis Center](#) (EMR-ISAC) understands that upon completion of this training the student will be able to identify the roles and responsibilities of the HSO and ISO.

Fire Safety Officer Program

(Source: Fire Engineering)

According to [Fire Engineering](#), the [Firefighters Support Foundation](#) recently released its newest free training program: "[The Fire Safety Officer: Roles and Responsibilities](#)." The program consists of a 25-minute video program and an accompanying 15-slide PowerPoint presentation.

Interested personnel can view the video material with the PowerPoint file acting as their hard copy notes, or they can use either resource independently. The video and PowerPoint portions of the program can be used by any agency or member either as prepared or as a basis from which to construct training modules or presentations of their own.

The Firefighters Support Foundation is a tax-exempt non-profit organization dedicated to assisting firefighters and rescue personnel perform their jobs effectively and safely. All of their programs are available free of charge.

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